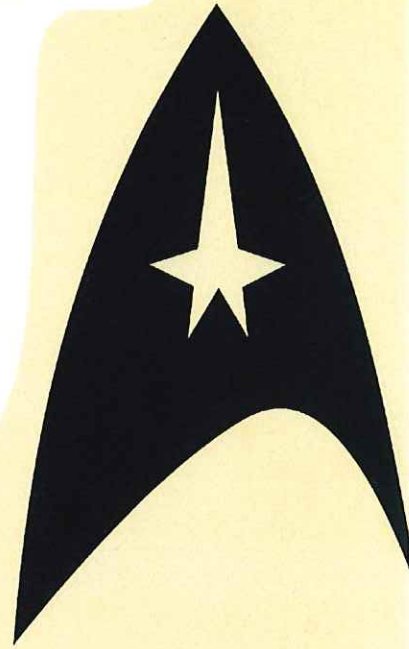
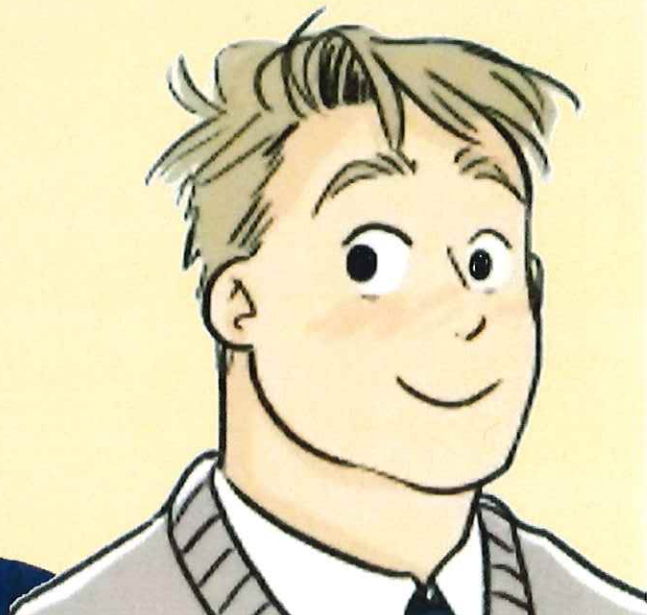
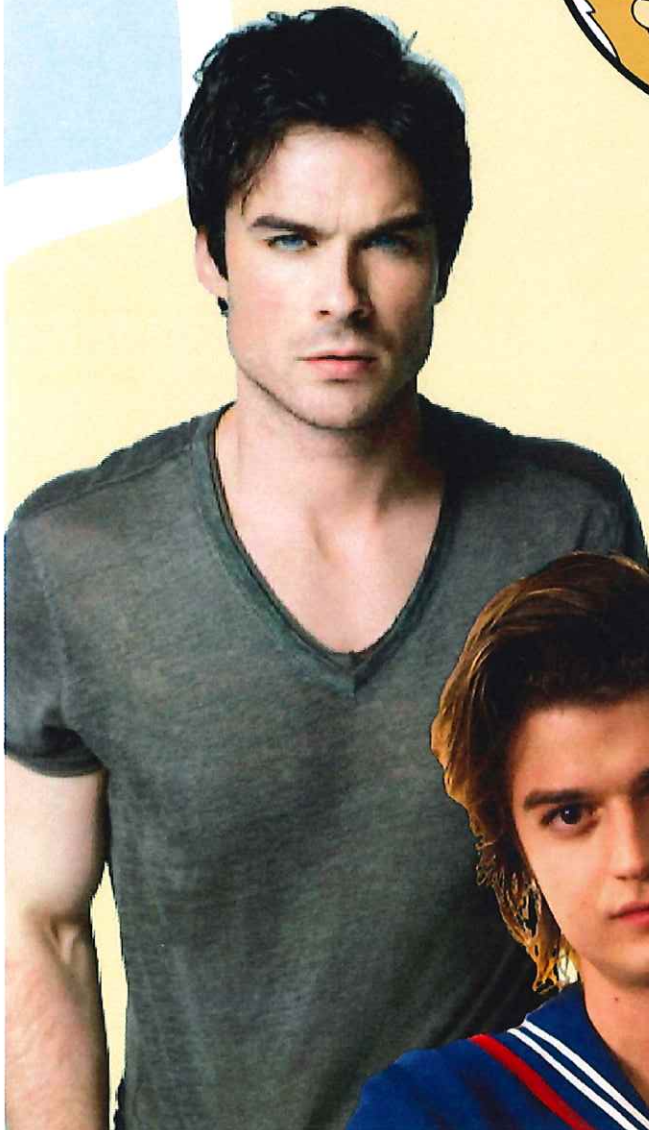


Young Writers/ Young Readers 2022



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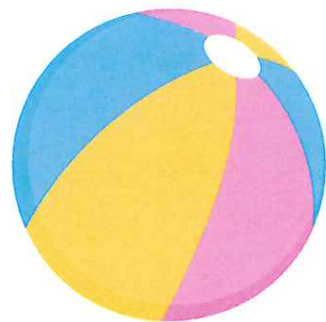
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THANK
YOU



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Ealan in Good Omens

After a long day of practicing and perfecting the art of potions, Ealan managed to escape the gruelling grasp of her father's lessons. She snuck out of the castle and followed the path down into the market. She had found a note earlier that week that turned out to be an advert for some sort of- well- she wasn't quite sure. The small paper advertised a job as an assistant to "combat the forces of evil", whatever that means. But Ealan had been so bored lately since she started lessons with her father again, so any reason to be away from his teachings was good enough for her.

She followed the winding streets of the market, heading towards the address listed on the advert. It was all the way on the other side of the market, so she had to walk a considerable distance before she arrived at her destination. When she finally reached the address that the advert had listed, she found it to be nothing more than a common apartment building. It surprised her, though it's not like she had expected anything in particular. An office, maybe? Or at the very least, a building with a clear indication of where the provided services are located. Nonetheless, she walked up to the door and swung it open to find a tall set of stairs leading up to a set of two more doors. Ealan hobbled up the stairs, her legs still slightly sore from the long walk here. Once she reached the top, she wasn't sure which door to knock on. There were only two, so there was a 50/50 chance that the door she knocked on was the one she was looking for. She thought for a moment longer before turning to her right and knocking on the door in front of her. Ealan could hear someone say 'I'm coming!' from behind the door, though very muffled through the door's thick oak structure. A few seconds later, the door swung open and behind it was a sweet old woman with white hair and a pink robe on.

"Yes, Dearie?" She asked, her voice slow and calming.

"Oh! Yes, erm- I'm here about the advert." Ealan responded, hoping she had knocked on the right door.

"Which one, love?" She asked.

Was there more than one? Ealan thought to herself.

"I'm not quite sure eh.. I found a paper in the market square a few days ago advertising something at this address." She told her.

"Right, love. Well, Madame Tracy does crystal ball and palm readings every afternoon except Thursdays. Parties welcome.

Would you like to come in, love?"

Ealan hesitated.

"The advert says 'Join the Professionals,'" she said. "It didn't mention Madame Tracy."

"That'll be Shadwell you'll be wanting, then. Just a sec, I'll see if he's in."

Madame Tracy squeezed past Ealan towards the other door and performed three stern knocks.

"Shadwell! You've got yourself a visitor, love."

When the door opened, a grouchy looking old man who smelt of sour coffee and moth balls stood before Ealan, mumbling something to himself.

"Well?" He said. "What do you want?"

"Oh! Yes, right. Er- I read your advert. 'Join the Professionals.' I think it said. I wanted to, er, -apply for the job?" Ealan told him.

"Aye. Yes. I, eh, forgot that I had put that advert up, since no one was responding to it so I had sort of just..." He trailed off quietly, then he seemed to remember what he was saying momentarily, "I had sort of given up that anyone would ever answer."

"Oh" Ealan managed to squeak out.

"What might be your name, lass?" he asked.

"E-Ealan. Ealan Crowstaff." She responded hesitantly.

"Why does that name sound so familiar? I swear I've heard that name before somewhere..." he started questioning.

"I-I don't know," said Ealan. "I'm not sure where you might've heard it before, I'm sorry.."

"Eh that's all right" He grunted. "Come in, please."

He motioned me into his apartment, inviting me in. It was hard to tell what sort of an accent that Mr Shadwell had, exactly. See, it sounded like a bit of everything, depending on what he says. Was it Welsh?.. No, it wasn't that strong. Possibly a Scottish, or maybe an Irish accent? Ealan wasn't sure, but it continued to bug her the more he spoke.

"Have ye all your own teeth, lass?"

"I'm not quite sure. I believe so."

"Are ye fit?"

"Pardon?"

"Are ye fit?"

"Well, sir, I find that to be sort of a rude question to be asking..."

"Oh, er, my apologies, lass." He told me. His cheeks flushed red of embarrassment. He quickly moved on to another question to change the subject. "Good. Have ye got your ane scissors, then?"

"Have I got what?"

"Scissors! Scissors! Are ye deaf?"

"No! Well, yes I've got myself a pair of scissors, but I'm not deaf!"

About the Author!

Lucy Anderson is an up and coming ninth grader at East High School in WCASD. In her free time, Lucy loves watching horror movies, drawing, and reading. Her favorite book is Good Omens by Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett, and her favorite genre is (as previously mentioned) horror! Lucy is excited to be back for her third year at WCU Young Readers/ Young Writers.

Underworld Setting

Khana struggled against the guards that dragged her by her arms across this fiery landscape. Sweat, not only from effort but from the searing heat, dripped down her face and neck. Giving up on thrashing, seeing it wouldn't help, she decided to look around for anything that might help. But the only things she could see were plumes of fire, puddles of lava, and cracked, charred, black roads of obsidian.

She let out a frustrated sigh and scowled at the guards. She focused her gaze ahead, wondering how and why the temperature was rising even more. Crooked buildings with sharp features were popping up around her field of sight. She began to pull at the two guards' grips again, getting more and more desperate as the towering volcano in the center of the city loomed ahead.

Finally, near the foot of the volcano, the guards pivoted and halted in front of a large mansion. As the guards knocked on the front door, Khana spotted a rather sharp piece of igneous rock sticking out of the ground. She kicked at it until it snapped. The guards paid no mind to her, patiently waiting for the owner of this grand house. By the time she had the stone blade firmly between her feet, she could hear footsteps behind the door. In a crazed state of desperation, she put the blade in her mouth and began thrashing her head towards one of the guards to free herself, but to no avail.

The door opened, revealing a tall demon dressed in a suit and tie, dark red horns sprouting out of his head. "Khana, what do you think you're doing?" he asked in a monotone voice while rolling his eyes. Khana grumbled and spat out the blade.

"Nothing, father." Khana groaned while rolling her eyes back. Khana's father took a small remote from his pocket and pressed a button. Immediately, the guards beside her let go of her arms and stood at attention. He looked Khana up and down, frowning. She had pale skin, brown hair, and blue eyes.

"Please explain to me why you look like a human," he sighed while making a flourish with his hand. *Woosh*. The sound of wind filled her ears as her clothes and hair briefly rippled. Khana looked down at her hands as her skin faded to a scarlet red, her hair turning black, and her eyes red. The transformation was complete once her canines turned into fangs and horns sprouted from her head. "Well? What were you doing?"

"Nothing, I said." Khana replied.

"You were on the surface again, weren't you?" her dad stated.

"Surface of what?" Khana asked, pretending to play dumb.

"The Earth! The crust Khana! I know you sneak up there when no one's looking!" he yelled while pinching the bridge of his nose. He took a deep breath and exhaled slowly. "Listen, Khana. I don't know what you could possibly see up there that's so intriguing, but this needs to stop. There is absolutely no reason for you to be up there. And if you are found out, our king, Satan, will *not* be happy. I am at the top of the social hierarchy for a reason. I work for Satan himself for a reason. We have this mansion *for a reason!* And I will not have our lives ruined because of your foolish shenanigans. You're not a child anymore. And you're not a human either. You're a demon, so start acting like one. You will not be leaving the mansion for a week, understand?" Khana clenched her fists and mumbled something resembling a yes. "Good. Now come in."

Khana immediately stormed up to her room and slammed the door behind her, sitting on her couch by the window. She looked out at the city her father calls home. Hot, charred, noisy, hostile, red light everywhere and everyday. Never changing. Not to mention it was ruled by an immortal and tyrannical king. It was frankly an awful place, but no one had the guts to say it. But on the surface, everything is different. Sure, it isn't perfect, but it's a place where Khana feels like where she belongs. Where outcasts can still be accepted, where things change, where people get chances and opportunity. It already felt more like home than this place.

"Someday I'll leave this place forever and get a new life up on the surface," Khana said to herself, a small smile creeping up her face. "It's only a matter of time."

Rainforest Haiku

Lush, grand, green tree tops
Towering over fresh soil
Dewdrops on the leaves

Desert Haiku

Sandy, vast, and dry
Sweltering sun beats on dunes
Not a pond in sight

About the Author

Eme Choi is a rising 9th grader who goes to Strath Haven High School. She likes reading, writing, skiing, karate, rowing, viola, and guitar. One of her favorite books is *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner. Her favorite genres of literature are fantasy and dystopian.

Inferno

By: Stephen Glaudel

Fire, smoke, a tinted red sky. The very world now seemed red. An abundance of warm colors crowded the landscape. Flourishing reds, exploding oranges, and eye piercing yellows were shown everywhere. And the heat, the gruesome dreaded heat. Not the humid welcoming heat of the summer months, but a hot dry monstrosity that sucked any thought of the winter or cold from your slowly melting brain.

The ground, a craggy black wasteland of hot coals and stones, scalded bare feet. Crevasses and geysers released molten rock and lava, spraying your face causing boils and blisters.

Overlooking this hellish landscape sat a tower. Obsidian and ebony, it stared down at you, always watching, always listening. The volcanoes and lava would erode the ground and lands, but not the tower, the omnipresent watcher in the sky. Something that always was and always would be.

About the Author

Stephen Glaudel attends school in the Pennridge school district and will be starting his first year in high school. He not only enjoys reading and writing, but loves to play sports and run. His favorite book is Scythe By: Neal Schusterman and his favorite genre is dystopian fiction. Stephen hopes to pursue his writing talents in the future.

The Old Door

*Over the fallen,
Through the arched way of branches,
Into the old door...?*

All too Real

Vanny blinked awake and peered around what looked to be a hospital room bathed in a white, fluorescent light. She propped herself up from her sunken mattress and wondered how she had gotten from the deep, fantastical forest she had been wandering to this room. She couldn't have just woken up from a dream, it felt all too real to just be fake. No, there had to be another reason why Vanny had ended up here, why she was no longer within the heart of that forest. Kicking off the bed covers, she noticed the door to the room slightly ajar. Vanny hurriedly stumbled through the twisting, snow-white corridors, her bare feet pattering against the cold floor and her simple hospital gown rustling with each stride. Peeking into some of the other rooms, Vanny could make out more of the same basic dwellings, either completely empty or holding other patients. As a regular hospital, it lacked the necessary equipment many hospitals would call standard, leading Vanny to assume that this wasn't just a hospital. She wasn't crazy, if that's what the doctors, or whoever, thought. This place looked to be a mental institution, hospital, whatever, of kinds. She knew what she saw, what she felt in that forest. Vanny was sure that place had been real. She wasn't supposed to be here. Vanny needed to leave.

About the Author

Alex Han (She/Her) is a rising 9th grader going into Rustin High School. She enjoys hobbies which include reading/writing all things fictitious, playing video games, and listening to a wide variety of music. Other fun facts: her favorite genres of media are action/adventure and sci-fi, while her favorite book series is the fantasy series Pendragon.

Story:

I grasp my sword and torch and venture into the dark forest to slay the hydra. I walk slowly, as to remain quite and to not disturb the hydra. Despite my careful footsteps, I stumble over a loose root. Nearby, I hear a roar and the breaking of limbs. I dive into brush to hide from the hydra, but it hears me fall and crashes in my direction, stopping just ahead of where I hide. I climb out with caution and sneak up on its side. I use my sword and slice one of its heads. It thrashes around before I have a chance to burn the stump, and grows two heads in the severed ones place. I shash at another head, and quickly bring the torch down to the stump. The next head turns to me and opens its mouth wide. A squirt of sizzling green liquid comes spraying out.

About the Author:

Her name is Mary Hyson, and she is 14. She likes playing the saxophone, playing computer games, and reading. Her favorite series is the Uglies series, and her favorite genre is science fiction. She goes to the DASD STEM academy.

Short Story:

Simon snuck into the kitchen, taking a pair of scissors. He went back upstairs and into the bathroom. Simon turned on a dim candle. He looked into the mirror above the sink, and cut off a chunk of hair. He put the scissors back and threw out the hair. Simon got into bed. The house stood still. Simon had a restless night. Fear of the morning drowned him. But when Simon woke up, no one noticed. At breakfast he assumed something from his mother at least, but nothing. The plan was to cut off a chunk every month until it was his desired length.

About the Writer:

Damien Neff likes to write, listen to music, and draw. Their favorite book is "Spy Cat" by Peg Kehret. His favorite genres are horror and fiction. Damien is 14 and goes to Downingtown Middle (west) and will be going to the West Downingtown High School this upcoming school year.

A different world

The startling sound of my phone alarm forces me to blink myself away from the sweet dreams. I groan as I slam my hand to stop the horrible sound I wake up to everyday. Like every other day, I pull on my uniform and brush my too-straight hair. Walking up to my mirror, I straighten up my skirt and collared shirt. Suddenly my hand stills over my shirt and I take a startled step back.

"Did I see that mirror ripple like water?" I mutter to myself. I try to shrug it off my hallucination, when the mirror's surface moves gently. With a surprised gasp, I place my hand in the mirror. Like normal, I feel the hard, cold surface, until my hand starts sinking.

Mixing of ideas

"Amira!" I hear Kilorn scream. As he rounds the corner, I grab hold of him and muffle whatever stupid thing he was going to say. I look slightly over my shoulder to see if Cal, the Fire Prince, has noticed me yet.

"Do you have to be so loud? I'm going to lose if you keep talking with that loud voice of yours," I whisper furiously. Pushing Kilorn aside, I use my powers, or abilities as Silvers call it, and move the tree branches into a cage over Cal. As he reacts by trying to burn the branches, I quickly melt the rocks nearby to armor the tree. I giggle at Cal's useless struggle to escape as I walk out of my hiding spot to tease him.

"Seriously Amira? Again? Mira, what'd I say about breaks? And resting? We know, well I do, what you can do and how powerful you are. So please, leave me alone. I'm busy, already, planning all the routes for the prisoners to escape," he says with an annoyed expression. I cackle as I release my hold over him and head over to where the other Newbloods are, training. The day lay heavily over us, reminding where we are going today evening. Though it could seem like a simple escape, this plan could end in a blood bath.

DJ the Playlist

Run - BTS

Running to my dream, like I always do. Running to accomplish something only I can. Every time I hear that sweet dream, my hands only graze the edges and fall short, again. Evrytinr, I try harder, but that effort isn't enough. I have to push through my limit to do what I was born to do. Though I have been running toward this same dream since I was born, never have I stopped or accomplished this "goal". Guessing from how I am nowhere near to achieve this goal of mine, it will take the rest of my life, or die trying. Though I'm slowly starting to crack and break away, revealing the weak and pathetic self, I shall live to the day when peace can be found in this dark and evil world, as I may be the only light of this universe.

About the Author

Anna Suh is an Eighth Grade, going to Ninth, and is currently going to Radnor High School. Her hobbies are dancing and reading. Anna's favorite genre is fantasy or dystopian. Her favorite book used to be Keeper of the Lost Cities, but now it is a variety of book series like Divergent. Though she is living in Wayne right now, Anna used to live in many different Asian countries.

STORY:

What if a portal was opened that led to a minor- opposite version of our world? Would you venture through? if you find yourself curious as to what is on the other side, maybe you should travel through, It'd be a cool adventure. What if I told you you'd get to meet your favorite celebrity, only they were... different..? Imagine you're the only person that Knows about this mysterious portal... Would you tell anyone, or would you take the risk of keeping it to yourself, and go through alone? Speaking from experience, it'd be best to not let your curiosity get the best of you, as the things I saw in the portal I traveled through are both dangerous and unnerving. Of course I got out safely, or I most likely wouldn't be able to write about my experiences now. One thing I did learn from traveling through the portal, though, is that looks are defineyley deceiving. For instance, you could see your best friend walking, and of course by default, would try to talk to them and see if they're themselves; but, in this world, everyone is different. I knew, the day that I walked inside of the portal that I'd be changed forever.. and I am. Although, I didn't know what to expect before walking inside. I had been the first person to discover something as crazy as this, anyway. A few times, I have had to encounter a few different mirror versions of some people, who knew I didn't belong; which didn't end well.

These people are different; and not in the way you'd think. They don't just have a personality change but the way they act is completely different, and not in a good way. Trust no one.

About the Author:

Angelica Todd is a transitioning 9th grader at East High School. She enjoys reading, writing (sometimes), drawing and painting. Drawing and painting are one of her more favorite hobbies, as she's able to complete more projects thanks to the free time of summer. With reading, however, she enjoys the mystery/adventure/romance/horror genre.

It's the year 2098, Al was traveling to come back home to his family. He was playing with a time machine which broke and now he is stuck in this year. It's a dark and misty night as Al walks out of the time machine Al is a musician he loves music. Al has always loved to play music, that's his passion he loves to teach people to play. Al is the type of person who is just naturally annoying. He doesn't seem to know that he is that way, now he has been stuck in this year for a while now and has started to make a life in this new living environment. He made a friend named Sally who is kind, Funny, Smart, and also loves to play music. She and Al have been hanging out since he got in whatever this world is. Each person has their own living quarters which provides them with everything they could ever wish for or want. Al's living quarters is full with things he has never seen before considering he was from the year 2002. There are so many high tech computerized objects. Every morning he has to put his wrist on this beeper to inject what they call "vitamins" ' but Al's pretty sure they are to control the citizens from obtaining their own ideas, which is smart but that's not what he is used to because back in his old year he was able to vote and speak his mind when he wanted. This was getting tiring. He hated having to keep his opinions to himself all the time. Welp it's been quite a day, why don't we go to the bar and treat myself. Al knows that he should be trying to get home to my family but he doesn't know how to get the time machine to work. He's been trying for the past 9 months but hasn't been getting anywhere with it As Al heads to the bar he sees Sally who is sitting in a bar stool so he goes and sits next to her and chats with her. As the time went on Al began to get wasted and as his annoying habits began to show. Now his habit was roasting people and making them feel bad about themselves, of course he doesn't know he does that eventually people began to get mad and frustrated with him so much they called the "police" to escort him out of the place. Al quickly jumped to his feet and began to collect himself and ran towards a path that led to the woods. Al followed the path which led to a house which was illuminated by lights he knocked on the door and a young lad around late 20's stepped out and let him inside. As he was about to enter he saw that she has a TAIL *that can't be possible. No human can have a tail like that* so he ran as fast as he could possibly run and somehow he ended up in his bed exactly where he was the whole entire time and no time has passed at all.

About the Author

The author's name is Eleni Wendt. She is 14 years old, in 9th grade and will attend Torrey Pines High School in California. Her favorite genre of book or writing is realistic fiction.




Mr. Rea's Shared Readings



Strange Grace Tessa Gratton

The Witch Boy Molly Knox Ostertag



Miles Morales Shock Waves Justin A.
Reynolds & Pablo Leon

Amulet Book One The Stonekeeper Kazu
Kibuishi



Welcome to St. Hell My Trans Teen
Misadventure Lewis Hancox



The Last Shadow Warrior Sam Subity





Mr. Rea's Shared Readings



I Was Born for This Alice Oseman

Heartstopper Graphic Novel Series Alice
Oseman



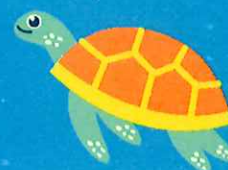
Pumpkin Heads Rainbow Rowell & Faith
Erin Hicks

Anya's Ghost Vera Brosgol



Kingdom of the Wicked Kerri
Maniscalco

Sing Me Forgotten Jessica S. Olson





Mr. Rea's Shared Readings



Cemetery Boys Aiden Thomas

To Kill a Kingdom Alexandra Christo



A Magic Steeped in Poison Judy I. Lin

Mooncakes Wendy Xu, Suzanne Walker &
Joamette Gill



The Graveyard Book Neil Gaiman

The Prince and the Dressmaker Jen
Wang

